and communication activities of the Government including through Central Health Education Bureau.

Call centres for health awareness

†939. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering on a comprehensive scheme for opening "call centres" for health awareness in the country with the cooperation of the States;

(b) if so, the format thereof; and

(c) whether financial sharing for operating these centres has been considered and if so, the percentage of financial sharing between Centre and State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Infant mortality rate

†940. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the fact that the infant mortality in the country is much higher than other countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the name of the State in the country where mortality rate of infants is highest; and

(d) the measures proposed by Government to bring down the infant mortality rate in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b)The infant mortality rate in the country is 63. The infant mortality rate for our neighbouring countries is, Bangladesh 64, Nepal 71, Pakistan 87, Afghanistan 162, and Myanmar 83. In Africa, Kenya has an infant mortality rate of 69, Uganda 86, Zambia 105, Zimbabwe 58 and Ethiopia 100.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) Orissa has the highest infant mortality rate in the country (87).

(d) The measures being implemented in the country to bring down the infant mortality rate in the country are:

i. National ARI Control Programme

ii. National Diarrhoeal Diseases Control Programme

iii. Universal Immunization Programme

iv. Provision of essential newborn care

v. Promotion of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life.

National Health Insurance Scheme

941. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce National Health Insurance Scheme across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the infrastructure is available to implement the scheme across the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) methodology eyolved to meet the annual expenditure over the scheme; and

(f) by when the scheme is likely to come into force?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATi PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Granting accreditation to hospitals

942. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as a prelude to boost medical tourism in the country,